

## Message Text

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70

ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EUR-25 ISO-00 IO-15 ACDA-19 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 CCO-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USSS-00 OPR-02 AID-20 PC-04 DRC-01 /185 W

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R 121505Z OCT 73

FM AMEMBASSY TUNIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3439

INFO USINT ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TUNIS 5924

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:TS, XF

SUBJECT: CURRENT DEVELOPMENTS IN TUNISIA

REF: TUNIS 5904 AND PREVIOUS

1. NO CHANGE IN LOCAL SECURITY SITUATION SINCE PREVIOUS CABLES. REPORTED PLAN TO ORGANIZE DEMONSTRATION IN SUPPORT OF TUNISIAN WAR EFFORT IN DOWNTOWN TUNIS AFTERNOON OCT 11 NOT CARRIED OUT. (ALLEGED DEMONSTRATORS APPARENTLY HAD NO SPECIFIC TARGET IN MIND.) REASON FOR DEFERMENT NOT KNOWN. FOR PAST TWO DAYS BOP TRUCKS NO LONGER STATIONED NEAR USIS.

2. TUNISIA PRESS AGENCY (TAP) AFTERNOON OCT 11 RELEASED STATEMENT BY PRESIDENT BOURGUIBA "COMMENTING ON DEPARTURE OF TUNISIAN ARMY CONTINGENT FOR WAR OPERATIONS IN ME" IN WHICH HE SAID TUNISIA WILLING FORGET DIFFERENCE WITH JORDAN AND REESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS IF KING HUSSEIN WOULD ENTER THE WAR ON SIDE OF ARAB BROTHERS. CALLED THIS "CHANCE OF HIS  
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LIFE" TO HELP FORGET SEPT 1970 EVENTS ANDMAKE RECONCILIATION

WITH PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE. CONCLUDED THAT JORDAN'S PARTICIPATION IN WAR WOULD BE OF SUCH IMPORTANCE THAT IT WOULD BE, TO CREDIT OF KING HUSSEIN, "AN INESTIMABLE SERVICE TO ARAB CAUSE". EDITORIALS IN OCT 12 ISSUES OF PSD FRENCH DAILY L'ACTION AND INDEPENDENT ARAB DAILY AS SABAH DEVOTED TO THIS "OFFER".

3. ALL FOUR LOCAL DAILIES CARRY VARIOUS WIRE SERVICE REPORTS OF U.S. ARMS SHIPMENTS TO ISRAEL AND MOVEMENTS OF SIXTH FLEET. PSD DAILIES CARRY FRONTPAGE ARTICLE COMPOSED FROM VARIOUS SOURCES REPORTING MOVEMENT OF VOLUNTEERS TO ISRAEL FROM U.S., WHICH " ACCORDING TO OBSERVERS ARE SOLDIERS AND PILOTS RECENTLY RETURNED FROM INDOCHINA AND SENT TO MIDDLE EAST TO FIGHT ON ISRAEL'S SIDE". TASS REPORT ON THIS ALSO CITED AS WELL AS TASS REPORT THAT U.S. PLANS REPLACE 50 ISRAELI FIGHTER BOMBERS. ADDS THAT "WASHINGTON DISPATCH" CITING RELIABLE SOURCES, SPECIFIES THAT THESE ARE NOT SALES OF MILITARY EQUIPMENT TO ISRAEL BUT GRANTS OR LOANS (FOURNITURES). ARTICLE ALSO CITES LEBANESE AN NAHAR REPORT THAT SIX UNITS OF SIXTH FLEET COMING FROM CYPRUS PENETRATED ISRAELI TERRITORIAL WATERS SHORTLY BEFORE MIDNIGHT ON OCT 10. REPORTS FROM CYPRUS ON AIR ACTIVITY INCLUDING MOVEMENT OF 50 PHANTOMS TO AKROTIRI ON OCT 6 AND DEPARTURE OF 25 OF THESE TO TURKEY ALSO INCLUDED. ARTICLE CONCLUDES WITH REPORTED PENTAGON SPOKESMAN STATEMENTS ON SOVIET EQUIPMENT SHIPMENTS AND MOVEMENTS OF SIXTH FLEET SHIPS "INDEPENDENCE", "FRANKLIN ROOSEVELT" AND "GUADALCANAL". GOVERNMENT-OWNED LA PRESSE CARRIES LOWER KEY AFP STORY ON SHIPMENT OF ARMS AND PHANTOMS TO ISRAEL. THIS REPORT SAYS U.S. MILITARY EXPERTS EVALUATE ISRAELI LOSSES AT 600 TANKS AND 75 PLANES "IN FIRST SIX DAYS OF WAR". INDEPENDENT AS SABAH IN ARTICLE HEADLINED "U.S. USES GOOD OFFICES TO END WAR BUT CONTINUES TO SUPPLY ISRAEL WITH ARMS" REPEATS SOME OF REPORTS MENTIONED IN PSD DAILIES ABOVE. SO FAR NO MEDIA MENTION OF MENA REPORT MENTIONED STATE 202319. OR U.S. DENIAL. (THESE ISSUED TOO LATE TO MAKE OCT 12 DAILIES.)

4. ONLY REPORT OF TUNISIAN PUBLIC'S NEGATIVE REACTION VIS-A-VIS U.S. SINCE WAR BEGAN WAS OCT 12 REFUSAL OF TAXI DRIVER TO TAKE EMBASSY LOCAL (FRENCH) WOMAN TO AMERICAN EMBASSY. NEVERTHELESS, WE ARE KEEPING VIGILANT WATCH OVER LONG WEEKEND (MONDAY IS LOCAL HOLIDAY).

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5. COMMENT: PRESS STORIES, PARTICULARLY PSD DAILIES HODGEPODGE OF REPORTS, ARE NOT CONDUCIVE TO KEEPING SITUATION CALM HERE. BOURGUIBA GAVE HISTORICAL SPEECH AT NATIONAL PRESS INSTITUTE THIS MORNING BUT MADE NO MENTION CURRENT MIDDLE EAST SITUATION ACCORDING PRESS AND RADIO ACCOUNTS. SEELYE

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